**IN THE CLAIMS:**
Kindly replace the claims of record with the following full set of claims:

1. (Previously Presented)A method of processing an input digital video signal comprising video frames so as to provide a modified digital video signal for a motion estimation step said processing method comprises the steps of:
-              computing a histogram of luminance or chrominance of original values associated with pixels belonging to a video frame,
-              analyzing the histogram to provide histogram parameters, and
-              correcting the original pixel values on the basis of the histogram parameters to provide modified pixel values, which yields the modified digital video signal to be used by the motion estimation step.

2. (Previously Presented)A method of processing as claimed in claim 1, wherein the analyzing step comprises a sub-step of calculating a translation parameter of the histogram, and the correcting step is adapted to derive the modified pixel values from a sum of the original pixel values and the translation parameter.

3. (Previously Presented)A method of processing as claimed in claim 1, the analyzing step comprises a sub-step of calculating a width variation parameter of the histogram, and the correcting step is adapted to derive the modified pixel values from a product of the original pixel values and the width variation parameter.

4. (Currently amended)A method of processing as claimed in claim [[3]] 1, [[it comprises]] further comprising the [[a]] step of:
                filtering the modified digital video signal so as to provide a filtered modified digital video signal for the motion estimation step.

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5. (Previously Presented)A method of encoding an input digital video signal comprising the steps of:

- pre-processing the input digital video signal so as to provide a modified digital video signal,

- estimating motion from the modified digital video signal so as to provide motion vectors,

- compressing the input digital video signal from the motion vectors so as to provide an encoded digital video signal,

wherein the pre-processing step comprises the sub-steps of :

- computing a histogram of luminance or chrominance of original values associated with pixels belonging to a video frame,

- analyzing the histogram to provide histogram parameters, and

- correcting the original pixel values on the basis of the histogram parameters to provide modified pixel values, which yields the modified digital video signal to be used by the motion estimating step.

6. (Previously Presented)A video encoder comprising :

- a pre-processing device for receiving an input digital video signal and for supplying a modified digital video signal,

- a motion estimator for receiving the modified digital video signal and for supplying motion vectors,

- a data compressor for receiving the input digital video signal and for deriving an encoded digital video signal from the motion vectors,

wherein the pre-processing device comprises :

- means for computing a histogram of luminance or chrominance of original values associated with pixels belonging to a video frame,

- means for analyzing the histogram in order to provide histogram parameters, and

- means for correcting the original pixel values on the basis of the histogram parameters and adapted to provide modified pixel values, which yields the modified digital video signal for the motion estimator.

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7. (Previously Presented)A computer program product for a video encoder that comprises a set of instructions, which, when loaded into the video encoder, causes the video encoder to carry out the processing method as claimed in claim 1.

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